



Legislative Testimony
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**Written Testimony Supporting House Bill 6859, An Act Concerning
Predictable Scheduling**

Good day Senator Kushner, Representative Sanchez, and ranking members Senator Sampson, Representative Ackert and all the distinguished members of the Labor Committee. My name is Lori LeDonne, I live in Shelton and I'm a Smart Justice Leader with the ACLU of Connecticut. I am here to testify in support of House Bill 6859: An Act Concerning Predictable Scheduling.

Every person should be able to work in an environment that treats them with respect. Last year I worked in a restaurant that is part of a national chain. This was the first job I had after serving some time in prison – it was the only job I was able to find that would hire me, even though I had a long resume and a great work history. I had no choice, I had to take what I could get. At this particular restaurant, nearly every employee was formerly incarcerated. And when we were hired, we began at one wage, but for our second paycheck, our hourly rate actually dropped by \$2 an hour.

When I questioned my boss "Why?" his response was "I did it because I could." I realized he was using my marginalized situation for his own financial benefit. The manager at this restaurant frequently changed the staff's work schedule on the fly. Eventually I was "fired" after my manager texted me at 1am to come in for a 9am shift, which I did, but when he couldn't find coverage for the rest of my shift later in the day I had to leave, otherwise I would have had to work a 13-hour shift (I had

also just worked a 93-hour week). I have screen shots of his text messages where he told me “It’s a full-time job. You have to understand this is always priority” and with threats like “I am willing to give you one more chance” and “The offer ends today” if I didn’t come to work. It was a horrible working environment. The entire staff constantly had to put up with ridicule. but I have to tell you that at the time I really didn’t have any other options.

HB 6859 will give workers the stability we all need, ensuring that more than 140,000 retail, food service, long-term care and hotel workers in Connecticut will have a more predictable schedule and paychecks. More than anything, it will ensure that employers treat their employees with respect by setting their schedules in advance. Workers appreciate stability and reducing the stress of an unpredictable schedule helps everyone, whether a restaurant like where I worked or a big box store. I think we’ve all seen employees who are exhausted, depleted, people who clearly need some time to rest. That benefits no one, not the company, not the worker, and not their family.

When you can’t rely on stability in your job it makes it impossible to pay bills, plan for childcare, take care of your own health and well-being, and make plans for the future. Working people in Connecticut deserve to have jobs that respect their time while allowing them to thrive and prosper.

I strongly urge the members of this committee to support HB 6859. Thank you for listening to my testimony and I would be happy to answer any questions the committee may have.